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**Superior California Economic Development District**

*Modoc • Shasta • Siskiyou • Trinity*

737 Auditorium Dr., Suite A • Redding, CA 96001 • (530) 225-2760 • FAX (530) 225-2769

June 18, 1998

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CAL-FED Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: Mr. Rick Breitenbach

Re: Statement for the Official CAL-FED Hearings Process

Dear CAL-FED Committee:

We are in favor and support of the general notion of environmental reclamation of the Bay Delta relevant to water transportation through, around, and/or across the Delta for purposes of transporting water for agriculture, industrial, and urban needs to the south. However, we are steadfastly opposed to water transfers out of the Sacramento and Trinity River Basins and related watersheds for the purpose of increasing water deliveries above current amounts to water users south of the Delta. The current basis of additional water exports are predicated entirely on the premise of acquiring and transferring existing water rights; most of which are presently dedicated to agriculture production and/or municipal and domestic use in the region north of the Delta, primarily the Sacramento Basin and Watershed. Transferring those water rights and water supplies to municipal and industrial users in the Bay Area and areas south of the Delta, specifically the Los Angeles region, would retire some of the most productive farmland in California, decimating the number one industry in California, agriculture. As an economic development organization, our concern is for the potential economic impact and dislocation of jobs that would follow retirement of irrigated crop lands for purposes of water transfers.

The agriculture industry irrigates only the most productive land in an increasingly efficient manner. Over the past three decades, production tonnage has nearly tripled while utilizing essentially the same amount of water on a statewide basis. It makes absolutely no sense to retire productive farmland reducing the number one basic industry in California, and likely the most stable industry in this great agricultural state, for the sole purpose of providing increasing amounts of water to urban areas so that they can continue to increase in population and supposedly improve their economic base.

As has been proposed by CAL-FED member, Sonny McPeak, open marketing of transferrable water cannot be allowed to happen under any basis or format. As has been

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proposed by the CalFED Groundwater Committee, simply insuring groundwater basin water tables in no way prevents ag land retiring water transfers. It only means that when ag lands are retired and water is transferred that the new water owner, rights transferee, will not over draft the local groundwater basin or riparian surface water, shorting neighboring water users, possibly transferees as well.

It is a well-established fact that excess water flows (flooding) remain through the Delta in typical winters. The obvious answer to increasing water availability to water users south of the Delta is to develop more storage to effectively capture remaining unused water resources presently flowing through the Delta during the winter. Obviously, this poses a whole separate set of environmental factors, both for the Delta and for the areas in which additional water storage will be developed. There will be a substantial cost element to developing additional water storage and water supply for transporting through the Delta during high water need periods. However, there is a cost to having the luxury of convenient high quality water in highly populated areas where there is a very limited water supply, such as the Los Angeles region. We feel that if the people and industry south of the Delta will benefit from additional water supplies through additional storage, are willing to pay for it, and do it in an environmentally sound manner without damaging the basic economic resource and future water availability in the geographic regions in which additional water sources are attained, then this should be an allowable enterprise for those benefitting municipal and industrial water users south of the Delta.

Further, we support the intention of watershed improvement to enhance or increase water runoff. It has been proven both scientifically and practically that reducing overgrown brush and understory forest growth, measurably improves watershed runoff, but also enhances forest health, productivity and reduces risk of devastating fires.

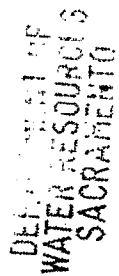
For those reasons, we oppose additional water transfers of any type out of the north state by way of the Delta, and we support the development of additional water supplies by increasing storage and improving watersheds, the costs of which should be born by the beneficiaries.

Sincerely,



Robert Nash  
Executive Officer

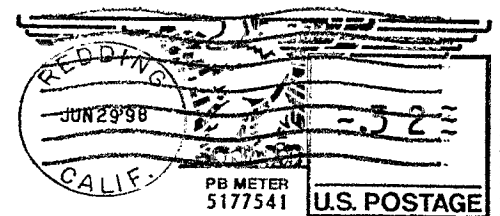
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